



Nebraska Weather and Crops

USDA's National Agricultural Statistics Service
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Agricultural Summary: For the month of February 2007, below normal temperatures combined with a number of snowstorms made livestock care difficult and increased forage demands, according to USDA's National Agricultural Statistic Service, Nebraska Field Office. At the end of the month snow depth averaged four to six inches across much of the eastern third of the state, while soils were bare across the Panhandle and parts of central Nebraska. Soil temperatures were ten degrees below year ago levels, with warmer conditions needed to dry feedlots deep in mud. The harsh winter conditions made calving difficult with some areas reporting above normal losses. The lack of precipitation across the Panhandle has producers concerned about low soil moisture conditions with blowing soils noted in some counties.

This release is based on data from FSA county directors, county extension educators, NOAA, and the High Plains Regional Climate Center. County comments and reports can be found at:

http://www.nass.usda.gov/Statistics_by_State/Nebraska/Publications/Crop_Progress_&_Condition/index

Weather Summary: At the end of February snow depth varied from east to west. The Northeast District had reports of over five inches of snow cover, while the Northwest and South Central Districts reported none. February precipitation was above average for the eastern two-thirds of the state with the exception of a few counties in the South Central District.

Field Crops Report: **Wheat** conditions improved from last month and rated 2 percent very poor, 7 poor, 32 fair, 54 good, and 5 excellent. This is well above last year's condition of 42 percent good or excellent. **Hay and forage** supplies rated 9 percent very short, 34 short, 57 adequate, and 0 surplus below year ago levels.

Livestock, Pasture, and Range Report: **Cattle and Calves** conditions rated 1 percent very poor, 10 poor, 26 fair, 56 good, and 7 excellent, well below year ago levels. Calving has progressed to 28 percent complete with calf losses reported as 2 percent below average, 85 average, and 13 above average.

The following are comments from Nebraska's FSA County Executive Directors and County Extension Educators:

NORTHWEST

DAWES: Calving is going well. Hay is expensive if you can find it. We have had very little precipitation this winter. We will need to have a wet spring.

SIOUX: Soil moisture continues to be low and no accumulations of snow are available to offset that at this time.

NORTHEAST

CEDAR: Snowstorms and snow covered fields have resulted in the need for additional feed and stress on livestock. With an additional snowstorm this weekend, the need to feed and care for cows and new born calves will increase.

DAKOTA: Calf losses aren't extremely high, but with our recent blizzard and long cold snap they are above average.

CENTRAL

BUFFALO: Livestock producers and farmers are ready for warm, dry weather. Although some dry fertilizer was spread on crop fields earlier, all fields are too wet for any activity this week.

DAWSON: Winter weather persists. Feedlots are deep. Producers are waiting for the frost to leave. No fieldwork has been done. Some alfalfa stands will be lost due to the ice.

EAST

YORK: February was not a good month for calving. It was warm a few days and then real cold a few days. Nights were extremely cold and wet. Snow blown by very strong winds were not ideal for livestock. Snow remains only in the ditches. Ponds are filling. Subsoil should be in better condition. Topsoil continues to soak up the melting snow as the soil thaws.

SOUTHWEST

HAYES/HITCHCOCK: Cold, wet conditions have caused calf losses and hay shortages.

RED WILLOW: The severe weather in January and February took its toll on the livestock. Many producers are reporting heavier than normal calf losses. Cow conditions deteriorated considerably as snow depths forced producers to supplement feed.

SOUTH CENTRAL

FURNAS: Most of the wheat looks alright at this time. There will be losses in terrace channels.

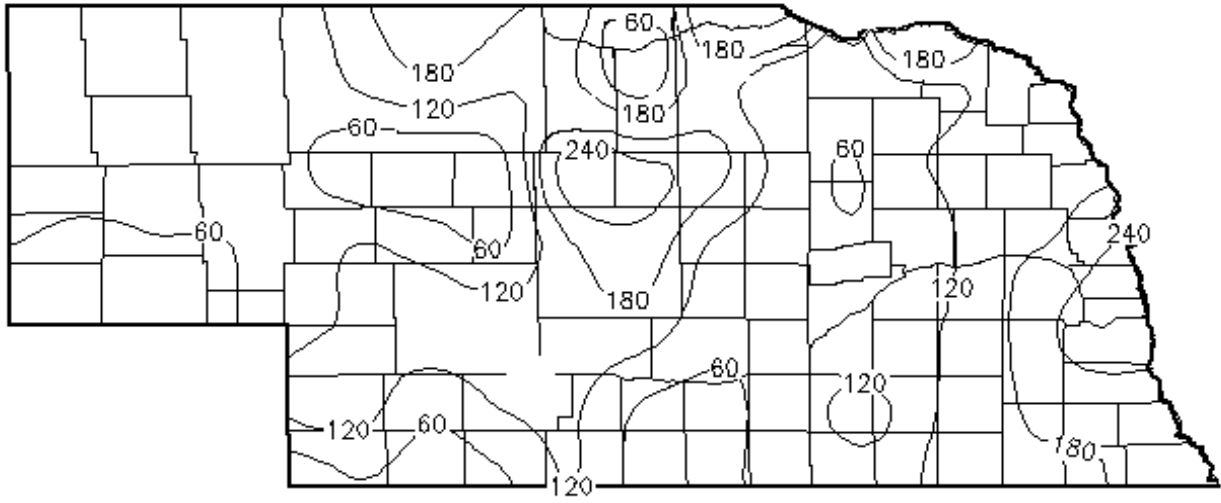
PHELPS: Calving has been difficult because of cold, wet conditions. Feedlots are very wet and have water standing in low areas.

SOUTHEAST

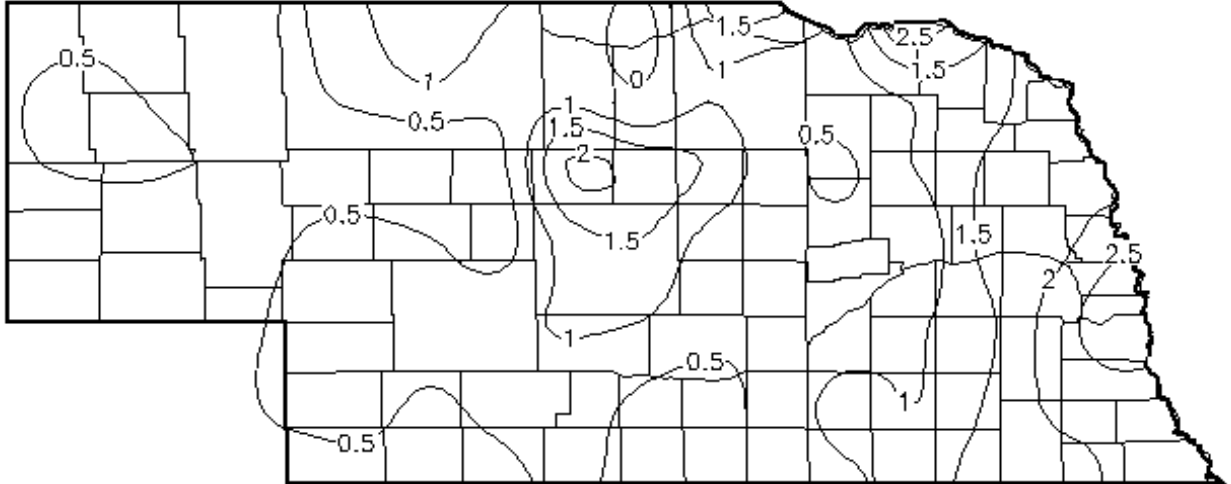
JOHNSON: Bad weather and a freak snowstorm have had a huge impact on the cow/calf operations. Several cattle producers have had a higher than normal death loss on new born calves and on older cows. Most cattle are standing in mud a foot deep. Farmers are getting machinery ready for spring, but are wondering if it will ever dry up enough for them to get to the fields.

NUCKOLLS: Blizzard conditions Thursday through Saturday caused problems for livestock producers. The snow will continue to melt causing muddy conditions for calving.

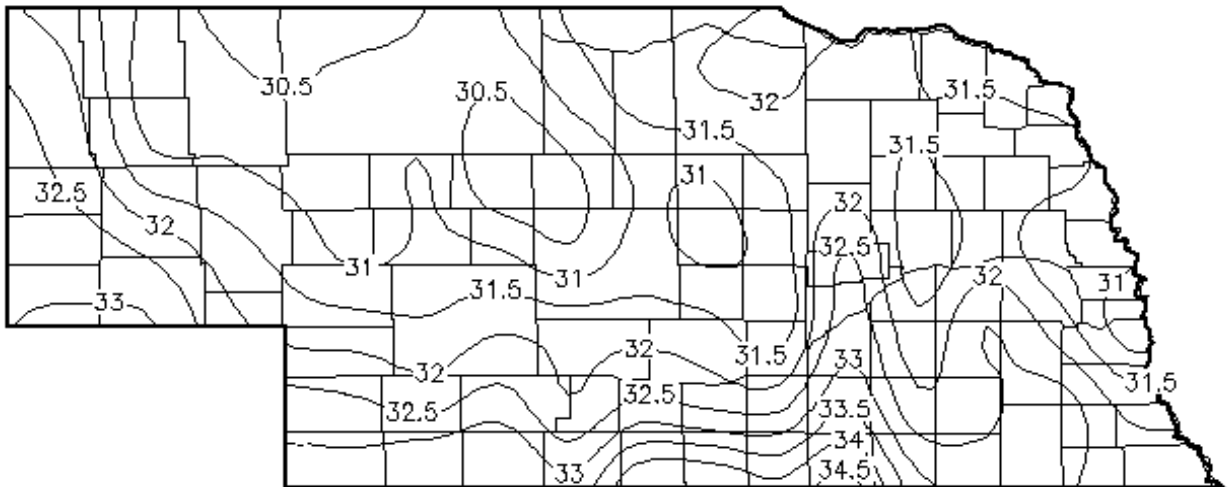
PRECIPITATION AS PERCENT OF NORMAL FOR FEBRUARY 2007¹



PRECIPITATION IN INCHES FOR MONTH OF FEBRUARY 2007¹



**SEVEN DAY AVERAGE TEMPERATURE AT THE FOUR INCH DEPTH UNDER BARE SOIL
FEBRUARY 26, 2007 – MARCH 4, 2007¹**



¹ Source: High Plains Regional Climate Center and Nebraska State Climate Office